



NEWSLETTER

Special Issue

4

Dial-Access Information Retrieval Systems For Education

VOLUME III

NUMBER 3

MAY 1966

STUDENTS COMMUNICATE WITH COMPUTER VIA TOUCH-TONE...

In New York, six students from the Mater Christi High School and from the Mary Louis Academy communicated with a computer in Yorktown Heights, N.Y., via touch-tone dialing telephones which were located in their homes. This experimental project allowed the students to use the computer for adding, subtracting, multiplying, dividing, and finding square roots. As suggested in the last D-A-I-R-S Newsletter #3, audio response units were connected into the computer system and the answers to the problems were transmitted to the students verbally.

An indication of the potential uses of such a system can be seen in the various ways in which the families of the students participating in the project also used the computer: one parent, a teacher, used the computer to figure out class averages; another parent used the computer to figure out his income tax; and in another family, a brother of one of the students in the experiment used the computer for his homework.

LEARNING SOFTWARE AT OKLAHOMA CHRISTIAN COLLEGE...

A one hour audio-tape workbook demonstration of the new learning techniques being developed at Oklahoma Christian College is now available for \$5.00 from Dean R. S. North, Oklahoma Christian College, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma 73111. These techniques were discussed in the March issue (#3) of the D-A-I-R-S Newsletter. Each demonstration kit contains:

- (a) background of the program and techniques;
- (b) samples from actual programs in music, art, English, speech, political science, and biology; and
- (c) a collection of articles and research materials on the program.

SELECTING PERSONNEL FOR A D-A-I-R-S...

The staffing of a D-A-I-R-S may easily determine the success or failure of a project even more than the quality of the equipment. But even before describing the staff and their functions, it is necessary to define the functions of the proposed D-A-I-R-S and its relationship to the school, teachers, and students. Depending upon the results of this step, one could find that the director of the system will also have to be in charge of the library, audio-visual services, and possibly in-service teacher training. If this is the case, the top position would be described as a Director of Learning Resources.

In any case, the top man should be an educator first and a technician second. His major responsibility will be to work with faculty in the design of materials and system functions which will increase student learning. This position might also be called Dean of Instruction or Vice President in Charge of Instruction.

The second man should be a technician first and an educator second. His major responsibility will be to develop and maintain an effective and efficient system which will satisfy the functional needs of the faculty and students.

Beyond these two positions, the staffing requirements depend upon the size and functions of the system. There could be a need for other technicians, AV specialists, librarians, TV & sound engineers, photographers, clerical help, etc. It is important to remember that technology and electronic hardware is useless in education without effective learning materials.

A LIBRARY OF RECORDED MATERIALS: AN ADJUNCT TO A D-A-I-R-S...

A D-A-I-R-S which operates at the three levels suggested in the second dial-access Newsletter (scheduled access, automatic random access, and manual random access via an attendant) may find the third level to be very useful at the elementary, secondary, or college level if used in conjunction with a large library of recorded audio and video materials.

At the elementary level, the public schools in Lake Oswego, Oregon, are using taped materials for first and second grade students in the area of phonics. These tapes stress auditory and visual perception of the vowels and initial consonants. The tapes are self-directed and are coordinated with worksheets and certain follow-up activities. The Lake Oswego schools have also developed a number of tapes for "read-a-long" activities so that the beginning reader hears and reads a story at the same time. The schools have also added taped narrations to many filmstrips for individual and group use.

At the high school level a large number of audio or audio-video tapes covering various occupations could be used by students in a guidance program. A similar set of audio or audio-video tapes covering a variety of post high school educational opportunities might also be of value. Students desiring such information could dial the attendant at any time and request a program on any occupation or on any institution of higher education.

At the college level, a library of recorded lectures, demonstrations, campus events, etc. could be made available via an attendant, particularly for review or supplementary use by the students.

DIAL "E" FOR EDUCATION...

The above headline is the title of one of the sessions at the American Management Association's Second International Conference on Educational Technology which will be held at the American Hotel, New York City, August 9-12, 1966. For the information and registration, contact C. Whitford McDowell, Jr., Vice President for Program, AMA, 135 W. 50th Street, New York, N. Y. 10020.

The session, "Dial 'E' for Education: The Realities of the School of Tomorrow," will be held from 3:30-5:30 p.m. on Wednesday, August 10, and will concern the development and current position of audio-visual information retrieval systems (AVIRS). The presentations will cover such topics as:

- 1) an overview of the state of the art, including school and college programs now under way and availability of systems equipment;
- 2) problems and frustrations of an AVIRS pioneer, emphasizing pitfalls to avoid;
- 3) how to get the teachers interested and actively involved in an AVIRS; and
- 4) report on programing - state wide distribution of tapes, films and slides and the economics of software distribution at the state level.

MISCELLANEOUS APPLICATIONS FOR D-A-I-R-S...

In colleges and universities and in schools where the students do not have a specific "home room," announcements of daily activities could be available to all students via D-A-I-R-S.

Physically handicapped students on or off school grounds could dial in for live lectures if intercom and/or outside connections were part of the D-A-I-R-S. It would also be very convenient for these students to dial into the D-A-I-R-S from special carrels adapted to their specific disability. It might also be possible for physically handicapped students to take tests via telephone in which the dial-access system would record their answers for later retrieval by the teacher.

A MORAL RESPONSIBILTTY OF EDUCATORS...

The relationship between teacher and student is in some ways similar to that between doctor and patient, particularly in our modern society where a student's achievement and progress in school affects his entire life. A patient goes to a doctor with a physical ailment and is given the usual treatment which is successful with most patients. The treatment doesn't work in this particular instance. How would the patient feel if the doctor said, "I'm sorry this didn't work. Go somewhere and die!" As a society, we expect doctors to try every known medicine and method in order to help us improve physically.

A student goes to a teacher to take a course and is unable to learn under the method which is successful with most students. Can the teacher say to the student, "I'm sorry you didn't learn under this method. You have failed and if you have to drop out of school, too bad." Society should be able to rely on teachers to try every known method or combination of instructional materials in order to help students improve mentally.

Doctors, for many years, have taken the Hippocratic oath at their graduation and this oath has acted as a guiding line for their profession. I would like to suggest a similar oath, The Socratic Oath, to be taken by teachers at their graduation in the hope that it too will act as a guiding line for the teaching profession. The oath is on the back page of this Newsletter.

DIAL-ACCESS SYSTEM AT PUNAHOU SCHOOL, HONOLULU, HAWAII...

Punahou School, with 3,400 students, grades K through 12, is the largest private college preparatory school in the United States.

The primary mission of the Punahou Audiovisual Department is to increase the efficiency of communication and to improve learning by providing a great variety of resources and equipment to teachers and students.

A Visual Production Center is available with equipment for teachers to produce, or have produced for them, overhead transparencies, 35mm slides, graphs, charts, posters, dry-mounts, color lifts, laminations, duplicate and facsimile reproductions, copies of anything--1 to 1000, filmstrips, 16mm motion pictures, enlargements or reductions from books or magazines, duplicate slides, etc.

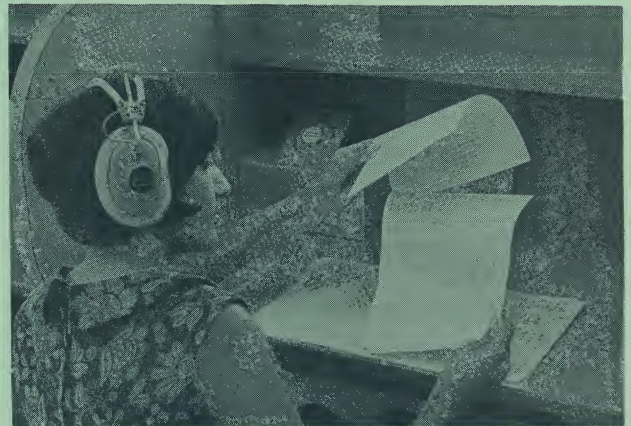


A Media Learning Center, adjacent to the library stacks, provides eight visually and acoustically treated carrels for student use. The carrels are equipped for use with non-book materials including a record player, slide or filmstrip projector, audio tape recorder, 16mm film projector, microfilm reader, and a reader-printer. Each of these carrels is also equipped with three sets of earphones.

A Listening Center with 38 individual student carrels provides random-access digital dialing to any one of 30 audio program sources. This Center is not used for foreign language drills as there are two language laboratories located in another building for that purpose. The Listening Center is designed to be used for supplementary and assigned learning in all areas of the curriculum. The greatest utili-

zation has been in the areas of foreign languages (not drill), social studies, English, and music.

In foreign languages, the materials used have been prepared by teachers and consist of plays, specialized dictations, poems, songs, and other music. In social studies, the materials used have been selected from commercially available materials such as: Mark Twain Tonight; The Making of a President; 20th Century (Gandhi, Nehru, Mao, Ho Chi Minh, etc.); In Search of Ulysses; The President's Men; etc. In English, the materials used are from commercial sources and include: plays, poetry, songs, Shakespeare, Bertrand Russell, Greek Drama, etc. In Music, the materials are also from commercial sources and have been arranged specifically to develop relationships in the teaching of music history.



DO OUR EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS CREATE CHEATERS?? - AN EDITORIAL...

During the last year or so, a number of articles on cheating have appeared in national magazines and journals. Some of these articles were reports of actual situations involving student cheating and some others were reports on surveys of cheating. The majority of the articles were editorials which placed the blame for cheating on the student or on society. To what extent are the schools themselves to blame?

During the early elementary school years, most children like to go to school, like their teachers, enjoy learning, and do not cheat. By the time these same children become juniors and seniors in high school, many of them look at school as a neutral or negative experience; ignore, dislike, and criticize their teachers; view learning as a necessary evil in their life; and indulge in various forms of cheating. What has happened to these students? Where did they learn or acquire these attitudes and habits?

The students' biggest problem in education is finding out from the teachers what he or she is supposed to learn. Most teachers are vague when asked about specific learning objectives mainly because few teachers are required to know the specific learning or behavioral objectives of their courses. This vagueness is encouraged by the use of a grading system based on some type of a curve. Under the curve method, as we all know, the students' grades are determined more by his performance relative to the rest of the class than by the amount the student learned relative to the course objectives. Could this competition for a limited number of A's or passing grades induce some students to cheat? Would it not be better to state the goals of a course and let the grade reflect a student's progress towards these goals regardless of his or her classmate's achievement?

In the vast majority of schools today, teachers have little, if any, knowledge about what the students know or don't know when they begin a course (this would involve the use of pretests). Because of "cumulative ignorance" (those things the student didn't learn in previous courses), many students will be incapable of learning certain course goals without remedial work. Does this barrier of "cumulative ignorance" encourage cheating? Would it not be better to use diagnostic pretests so that appropriate remedial work could be assigned and students could start learning from where they are rather than from where we think they should be?

Teachers at all levels talk about and believe in individual differences. Most of us are in agreement that students learn at different rates, have different amounts to learn (depending on their placement in diagnostic tests), and that while some learn best by one pattern of instruction, others may learn better via some other pattern. Yet, if a teacher presents the content of the course, the student's rate of learning is restricted to the teacher's rate of presenting; the amount to be learned by the student is limited to the amount the teacher presents; and the pattern of instruction by which the student is supposed to learn is determined by the pattern the teacher decides to use for the whole class. Could this attitude towards individual learning differences cause students to cheat? Would it be better to release teachers from the task of presenting course content and let them concentrate on TEACHING (finding out where students are intellectually and somehow, somehow, getting all, not part, of the students to achieve the goals of a course)?

CHANGING ADDRESS OF D-A-I-R-S NEWSLETTER...

All readers please note the change in address for the D-A-I-R-S Newsletter. This issue is the last special issue on dial-access to be sent out under the auspices of the Articulated Instructional Media (AIM) Program in Madison, Wisconsin. Subsequent issues will be under the auspices of the Center for the Creative Application of Technology to Education (CATE), P. O. Box 3008, College Station, Texas 77840. The reason for this change is that the Editor of the special issues on dial-access has been appointed Director of the CATE Center effective, June 1, 1966.

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THE SOCRATIC OATH ©

You do solemnly swear, each person by whatever he holds most sacred, that you will be loyal to the profession of teaching and just and generous to its members; that you will lead your lives and practice your art in uprightness and honor; that into whatsoever educational institution you shall enter, it shall be for the good of the learner to the utmost of your power, you will set yourself up as an example to your students by constant efforts to keep abreast of the changes in your field of study, adding what is new and dropping what is obsolete; that you will endeavor to determine the knowledge level of new students and adjust the course to their needs and, if appropriate, remedial studies for some and advanced placement for others; that you will exercise your art in such a manner that every student in your classes regardless of race, creed, or economic status will progress positively through the content of your course; that you will exhaust all available methods, media, and instructional materials if necessary in order to help the student learn all of the objectives of your course; that within your power you will not allow any student in your classes to proceed to subsequent courses without achieving all of the prerequisite behaviors available in your course and necessary for a successful progress in the subsequent courses. These things do you swear. And if you will be true to this, your oath, may prosperity and good repute be ever yours; the opposite if you shall prove yourselves forsworn.

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